SIGNAL

Allison, Phipps Dance

But Racing Legend Allison Takes The Checkered Flag

By Tim Trepany
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Anybody who expected to see a one-man show when Daytona 500 champion Bobby Allison raced at Saugus Speedway Saturday night was in for a surprise. Instead of a one-man show, Allison was part of a two-man show.

In the 40-lap NASCAR Sportsman main, Allison and Dave Phipps pulled away from the rest of the field and battled to the wire, with Allison scoring a narrow win over Phipps.

Rusty Parr started in the pole position, but dropped out during a pacing lap, giving the poll to Allison. Allison built a big lead over Phipps after 17 laps on the third-mile oval, but the third yellow of the race forced a restart.

After the sixth and final yellow came out on lap 29, Allison and Phipps pulled away for good, with Phipps staying on Allison's tail the rest of the race, frequently bumping Allison in the turns.

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Allison drove a near-flawless race in holding off Phipps. Phipps' best attempt to pass came on the straightaway on lap 34 when he tried to move ahead on the inside, but Allison cut him off.

Despite the frequent contact, there was no hostility between the two after the race. Phipps approached Allison and said, "I was the guy who kept bumping you." Allison jokingly replied, "Sorry I kept backing up into you."

After that exchange, Allison said, "He was strong enough to keep me busy. I was trying to keep the car hooked up is the main thing."

"He drove that thing really smooth and kept it from going sideways," Phipps said. "All my gauges were pegged, everything was overheating, but I wasn't stopping for anything.

"It was just a thrill. I was just trying to go as fast as I could."

Allison said the frequent yellow flags that plagued the race didn't bother him. "That's pretty common to short track racing," Allison said. "You expect it and you just try to keep going."

Craig Rayburn of Simi Valley was third, followed by Rich DeLong Jr.

The 25-lap Mini Stock main was just as hotly contested as the Sportsman with Kenny Smith getting the victory.

The lead changed hands four different times. Dennis Dalla led for the first nine laps, but then Gary Ebeling briefly took the lead. Dennis Andrews passed Ebeling for first on lap 12, but Smith took the lead for good when he got by Andrews on the backstretch of the 14th lap.

Susan Pittinato won the 15-lap Hobby Stock Figure 8 race ahead of Rick Crow of Canyon Country. Ator Gonshor was third, followed by Joe Barreras Jr. of Canyon Country.